

Quest Kids Faith and Race Family Resources

Why do faith and race matter for children and families?

We believe that all children are created in the image of God and are an essential part of the Body of Christ. As our church website states, "Everyone belongs here regardless of what you look like, where you're from, what you have, how you identify, or whom you love. Because at Quest Church, we boldly celebrate God's creativity, embodied in the rich diversity of human life. And we are called as a church family to the ministry of justice, liberation, and reconciliation for all people—in our church, throughout our neighborhoods, and around the world" (www.seattlequest.org/about). As a church community, we are blessed by the many faces, stories, and lives that encompass our diverse congregation, but we also recognize we can and we must continue to grow if we are to be faithful to the calling God has placed upon us as a people. And so, we will endeavor to explore questions of race, ethnicity, and identity in terms of what it means for us as followers of Christ and as people of God. Living into God's kingdom-minded vision of racial justice and reconciliation is a journey, not a destination. It's a marathon, not a sprint.

At Quest, we are committed to helping children understand that they are called to live out their Christian faith in certain ways in the world—to seek justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). Following Jesus looks like loving others, being generous and sacrificial with one's time and talents, and being bold and courageous in one's faith. It also means standing up against different forms of injustice in the world, demonstrating empathy toward others, engaging in lament when there is pain and suffering and practicing confession and repentance when one becomes aware of participation in systems of injustice that privilege some lives but not others.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit and the love of Christ, we desire to help kids grow in their discipleship; committed to living an authentic faith that seeks God's justice and shalom for everyone. We believe that race, culture, and ethnicity matter in our faith discipleship because it is part of our identity and part of who God made us to be.

God's story of justice, compassion, and love for people of every race, ethnicity, and culture are woven throughout all of Scripture.

Genesis 1:27

"God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them."

Galatians 3:26-28

“So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Ephesians 2:14

“For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.”

1 Corinthians 12:12, 27

“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ... Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”

Other passages include: Isaiah 60, Amos 5:24, Matthew 22:36-40, Romans 5:10-11, Romans 12:4-5, 2 Cor. 5:17-18, Ephesians 2:11-22, Colossians 1:20, 1 Peter 2:10, Rev 7:9-10, Luke 8:43-48, Luke 9: 1-12, Luke 10:25-37, John 3: 1-16, John 4:1-26

Talking to children about race

Like faith conversations, intentional conversations about race can take place at any time of day with children; in ordinary, everyday moments. Racial identity development happens for all children, just like emotional, physical, and social development does. Giving language to race, racial realities, and racism will help children learn how to navigate the world and respond appropriately to what they encounter.

Think about the books you read with your children, things you watch on TV or the movies, and what toys your child plays with. You might ask, *Who is represented and whose voices or stories are missing?* What comes up in the news, or in your neighborhood community that you can talk about? Help your child build an awareness of racial injustice and learn how to do anti-racism work at home and school. Have the courage to call out racism when you see it.

Reflect on your relationships, the people you interact with, the leaders that you listen to or follow. While families of color, by necessity, have conversations with their children about race and racism from a very young age, most white families live with certain privileges that have meant conversations about race are perceived as optional. Multiracial or mixed-race families also have their own unique set of stories and experiences to navigate. In all things, we acknowledge that talking about race is only a fraction of the work. Actively pursuing racial justice and reconciliation also means living in ways that affirm the wholeness and dignity of all people. This is a necessary part of our faithful discipleship as followers of Jesus.

How do we explain race to children?

What is race?

- A social construct of dividing people into groups based on physical characteristics (i.e. skin color, facial type, hair texture, etc.)

What is racism?

- Prejudice plus power OR system of advantage based on race
- Poor treatment of or violence against people because of their race
- The belief that some races of people are better than others

What is our goal in teaching our children about race?

- To instill a healthy understanding of self and others with regards to race, culture, and identity
- To acknowledge, celebrate, and appreciate differences in race
- To help kids make sense of the world they see and experience

Our teaching challenges the notion of “colorblindness.”

- “Colorblindness” regards color or race as an irrelevant identifier that bears no value. It disregards the ways people have been valued differently based on their color or race systemically and historically.
- It is confusing to tell our kids not to see our color differences because they do see color.
- Rather, we need to teach our children not to make value judgments about people based on the color of their skin.

How do we live as faithful disciples who practice God’s love, justice, and reconciliation?

Pray and partner with the larger church mission

- Pray for God’s Kingdom—it is multiethnic, multinational, and multilingual. Our goal is to point children toward Christ’s kingdom.

Be models of justice and reconciliation

- Parents are encouraged to examine your own thoughts, beliefs, and internalized racism that have been instilled over time. Take the time to reflect, confess and repent, unlearn any false beliefs, and seek healing.
- Be aware of yourself. What you say and how you behave toward those of another race will shape your children (i.e. do you make jokes about other races or laugh when someone does?).
- Examine your own social circles and model creating relationships with people from diverse backgrounds.
- Practice having conversations with your children about race on a regular basis. Questions and curiosity about race, culture, and differences should be welcomed and encouraged.

Create opportunities for learning and growth

- Teach your children about their own ethnic heritage and help them to recognize the complexities and diversities even within a race.
- Interact with people who are different from your family. Create opportunities for cross-cultural relationships—invite your neighbors to your home for a meal or children's peers over to play.
- Encourage your child to build relationships with a diverse group of friends.
- Expose your children to different cultures. Learn about their food, festivals, customs, language, and games.
- Diversify the books, videos, and other media your family consumes.
- Get to know other people's stories. Learn about who they are, where they are from, and what they love.

More action steps

- Encourage schools and churches to teach about racial justice and reconciliation.
- If our family members or friends say something racist, have the courage to interrupt and correct them.
- Use these moments of discourse to have conversations with your children—"I hope you'll never make remarks like that. What they said was based on their belief that people of ___ race is less valuable. This is false and not what we believe."
- When you say something that is harmful to another person or say something that is racist, even if unintentionally, do the hard work of naming the wrong, owning your mistake, seeking forgiveness, learning from the experience, and working to do/say things differently in the future.

Remember: You are not alone. The Holy Spirit enables us to participate in God's work of justice and reconciliation. – 2 Corinthians 5:17

Examples of Faith-Based Books about Race, Culture, and Identity

- *God's Dream* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu
- *God's Very Good Idea* by Trillia Newbell
- *ColorFull* by Dorena Williamson
- *God Made Me AND You* by Shai Linne
- *Maybe God is Like That Too* by Jennifer Grant
- *Who Is My Neighbor?* by Amy-Jill Levine
- *When God Made You, When God Made Light, and When God Made the World* by Matthew Paul Turner
- *When God Was a Little Girl* by David Weiss
- *The Harmony Tree* by Randy Woodley
- *The Beatitudes: From Slavery to Civil Rights* by Carole Boston Weatherford

Recommended Children's Bibles

**these Bibles are recommended for their diverse representation, mindfulness of gender, race/ethnicity, or multicultural elements*

- *Children of God Storybook Bible* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu
- *The Preschoolers Bible* by V. Gilbert Beers
- *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible* by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim
- *Shine On: A Storybook Bible* by MennoMedia & Brethren Press
- *Jesus Storybook Bible* by Sally Lloyd-Jones
- *The Adventure Bible*, NIV or NIV
- *The Connect Bible*, NRSV by Sparkhouse

Devotionals, Scripture Studies for adults

- Devotional: [Finding God](#): Hope is a Habit that Grows in the Dark - Ines Velasquez-McBryde
- [A Rhythm of Prayer](#), Sarah Bessey
- [Bread for the Resistance](#), Donna Barber
- [Becoming Rooted: 100 days of Reconnecting with Sacred Earth](#) - Randy Woodley
- App: StoryTeller - Morgan Harper Nichols
- Instagram: Blackliturgies - Cole Arthur Riley
- Book: [Sacred Pauses](#), April Yamasaki
- Podcast: [Reclaiming My Theology](#), Brandi Miller
- Podcast: [The Bible for Normal People](#), Pete Enns
- [Jesus and the Disinherited](#), Howard Thurman
- [Prayers for Faithful Families](#), Traci Smith

Places to Visit in Seattle

- Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience
- Northwest African American Museum
- DayBreak Star Cultural Center (United Nations of all Tribes)
- Nordic Heritage Museum
- Bainbridge Island Japanese American Memorial
- Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture
- Blake Island State Park and Tillicum Village
- Seattle Asian Art Museum- First Saturdays Free Family Day
- Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center
- *MOHAI & Seattle Children's Museum have rotating cultural exhibits